

## A Study on Fast Food Consumption Pattern among the Consumers in Coimbatore City

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### ABSTRACT

Fast food is characterized as quick, easily prepared and cheap alternatives to home-made meals, according to the National Institutes of Health (NIH). According to Merriam-Webster dictionary fast food is defined as readily available and consumed with little consideration given to quality or significance. Fast food is indeed processed and prepared with heavy equipment and standard ingredients in large scale at one location. The processed ingredients are packed in cartons and shipped to individual outlets located at different places with ensured uniform quality in all the outlets. Majorly there are two types of fast food restaurants i.e. organized and unorganized segments where organized segments accounts to 30-35 per cent with unorganized being 65-70 per cent. But upsurge in exposure to various dishes in social media platforms and malls with multiple fast food restaurants encouraging experimental behavior which are the positive sign to the growth of multinational chains gradually pushing the economy. Happy consumers prefer to buy back and make word-of-mouth to their family and friends, and it plays an important role in market development. This study attempts to reveal the consumer buying pattern in Coimbatore city and results helps to build new strategies according to the consumer perception thereby bridging the gap.

**Keywords:** Consumer, Consumer perception, Consumer preference, Fast food, Brand.

### INTRODUCTION

Fast food is characterized as quick, easily prepared and cheap alternatives to home-made meals, according to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) with fat rich, high saturated sugar, salts, and low nutrient. Though fast food is healthier and less nutrient than home cooked meals people prefer to give importance to appetite and palate taste. The most people

interchange fast food, street food and junk food. The main difference between fast food and street food is street foods are locally recognized foods prepared and processed for immediate consumption by the street or other public suppliers. The junk food is defined as pre prepared and packed food with flavors, preservatives, food color, taste makers which is equal to junk.

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India places 10<sup>th</sup> in the estimates for fast food per person with 2.1% of the overall expenditure (Ali, J., et al., 2010). The demand in Indian fast food is projected to rise at CAGR 18 percent by 2020, owing to evolving customer behavior and demographics. Analysts estimate that during the 2018-2022, the world fast food market to grow to 5.16 percent at the CAGR (<https://www.reportlinker.com/p05300873/Global-Fast-Food-Market.html>). Traditional family dining is being replaced by takeaway fast food. Traditional and regional varieties being added to menu at multinational fast food chains provokes them to prefer the restaurants.

Fast food started with Fish and Chip shops in Britain in the 1860's. Take away outlets were prominently crowd pleasing in the 1950's in United States. In 1912, first fast food restaurant was opened in New York on name Automat who deliver food from small glass window with coin operated slots with slogan "less work for mother" followed by another fast food outlet in 1921 at Kansas. In 1955 Mc Donald's brothers started Mc Donald's with main objective to promoting the cleanliness. With liberalization policy in 1991, KFC entered India in 1995 with permission to operate 30 outlets, due to adulteration of monosodium glutamate food served at outlet in Bangalore it is closed but hours later they got permission to operate the outlet. In 1996, Mc Donald's, Domino's and Pizza Hut entered India market place (Gupta, V., et al., 2018). Indian Mc Donald's is the first to have non-beef menu customized according to Indian palate tradition, preference and palate taste.

Majorly there are two types of fast food restaurants i.e. organized and unorganized segments where organized segments accounts to 30-35 per cent with unorganized being 65-70 per cent (according to CARE ratings). Multinational chains represent the organized sector as the food and service provided is same over all the branches. Family runs local business, push cart and street vendors who don't follow uniform standards comes under unorganized sector. Favorable demographic factors, good economic growth,

and increasing per capita expenditure are good sign to open up more branches and India welcomes the new international brands with wide arms. Digital India promoted the increase in plastic money i.e. debit and credit card gave push to disposable income. With plastic cards and easy digital transactions the restaurants lure customers with instant cash back, scratch cards which make them use it more often.

### **Top brands in India**

The most famous multinational fast food restaurants in India are KFC, McDonald's, Pizza Hut, Domino's, Subway, and Burger King. Fast food restaurants offer coupons, offers, combo offers, festive offers, complementary offers (upgrading the pizza, garlic bread, coke etc) and birthday coupons for frequent visitors to get more footfalls from new customers and frequent visitors.

### **Consumer Perception towards Buying of Fast Food**

The fast food restaurants serves as a social place to interact, recreate with family and friends apart from western culture. Agglomeration of items, flexibility to customize the menu, influences on the culture pushes to experience the fast food restaurants.

Primary perception about fast food served by multinational fast food restaurants is that only non-veg like beef and pork are available in food menu. Secondly Indian thinks that fast food is way too expensive and non-healthy with added flavor. But the restaurants changed the food menu according to Indian palate taste and preference with affordable cost and included vegetarian meals excluding beef and pork from Indian restaurants. Happy consumers prefer to buy back and make word-of-mouth to their family and friends, and it plays an important role in market development.

### **Objectives of the study**

The broad objective is framed to assess the consumption pattern towards buying of fast food in Coimbatore city.

- To study the fast food consumption pattern among the consumers in Coimbatore city.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Selection of Study Area

The Coimbatore city of Tamil Nadu was purposively selected for the study since is selected for the study area. Coimbatore is one of the most industrialized cities in the Tamil Nadu.

With increasing number of adults in the city, the fast food chains are expanding rapidly in the city over the years when compared to 10 years back. With increased number of working women at home, increased per capita income, and sophisticated life style they tend to deflect towards quick service restaurants as an alternative for home cooked meal. Multinational fast food restaurants such as Mc Donald's, Domino's, Pizza Hut, KFC and other local fast foods are increasing at pace. Hence, these organized fast food points are selected purposefully for efficient data collection and documentation purpose.

### Collection of data

A well structured and pre tested questionnaire was prepared for the survey. The consumers who are visited the fast food restaurants in various malls are explained with the purpose of data collection to get their coordination and interviewed directly. Since majority of the fast food restaurants are located in malls. The data

which is required for statistical analysis is collected to draw the results and conclusions. Pie chart, bar chart and other charts are used to illustrate the data. The secondary data for the study were collected from different websites, portals, published and unpublished articles. Sample size is 120 respondents.

### Tools of analysis

The data collected from the Sample respondents were analyzed using the statistical software in SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) which satisfy the goals set for the analysis.

#### a. Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics were indeed short descriptive coefficients that add up a data set that can portray either as the entire population, or a population-sample. For the data collected, Mean, Standard deviation was calculated to draw results. It simplifies the data for more responses on any measure.

#### b. Percentage Analysis

Percentage analysis is indeed one of the traditional economic instruments used commonly in primary data interpretation. The number of response by the respondents to a specific question is the proportion of the total respondents chosen for the research.

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{\text{Number of response by the respondents to specific questions} * 100}{\text{Total number of respondents}}$$

### c. Chi square analysis

The Chi Square analysis is determined by the relationship among categorical variables. Chi square analysis is used to study the fast food consumption pattern and impact of promotional measures on purchase behavior of consumer (Gaber, H. R., et al., 2014). It shows change in response of respondents with respect to attributes chosen. If calculated chi square value is less than table value we accept null hypothesis. Level of significance taken is 1 per cent and 5 per cent.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Fast food consumption pattern among the consumers in Coimbatore city

Consumption pattern of the consumer is analyzed by considering the fast food consumed them, frequency of consumption, decision maker in purchasing fast food, brand frequency, amount spent on consumption, occasion of consumption. The results are discussed and explained in the following sections.

#### 5.1. Fast food consumption

Most of the people love to consume fast food and few not. Respondents asked whether they eat fast food and they like fast food. The survey respondents' information concerning their fast food opinion aggregated and the findings are provided in table 5.1.

**Table 5.1 Gender wise distribution in fast food consumption**

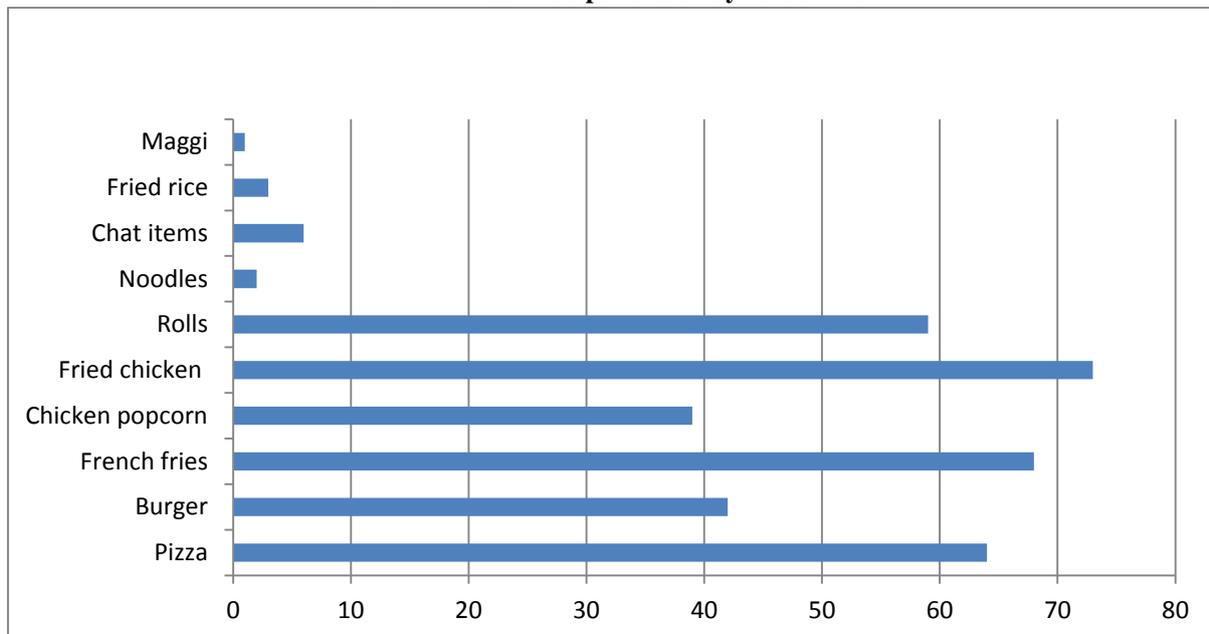
S. No	Gender	Do you eat fast good		Total
		Yes	No	
1.	Female	60(81.08)	14(18.92)	74(61.66)
2.	Male	37(80.43)	9(19.57)	46(38.33)
	Total	98(81.67)	17(18.33)	120
Calculated chi value =3.485;d(f)=1 Asym. Sig (2-Sided)- 0.048				

From the table 5.8 we can say that 81.08 per cent of females opted to eat fast food and about 80.43 per cent (37 respondents) males chose to eat fast food out of 46 male respondents. From this we can conclude that there is no gender difference in eating as there is no difference between two genders.

**5.2. Fast food items consumed**

Fast food consumed differs from one person to person. The survey respondents' information concerning their fast food consumed were aggregated and the findings are provided in bar chart 5.2.

**Chart 5.2 Fast food purchased by consumers**



From 5.2 chart we can say that more respondents consume fried chicken with 73 respondents followed by 68 respondents for French fries, 64 respondents for pizza, 59 respondents for rolls , 38 respondents for burger and 36 responses for chicken popcorn . Some perceive street food as fast food so few respondents they filled the option with chat items, fried rice and noodles. From this we can conclude that most of the fast food consumers

are non vegetarians as most of the respondents are opting to eat fried chicken.

**5.3. Time preference in fast food consumption, comfortable location to visit**

Different people eat the fast food at different times in different locations depending on convince of the consumer. The survey respondents' information concerning their convince time and location are aggregated and the findings are provided in bar table 5.3.

**Table 5.3 Time and Location preference of the consumer**

S. No	Particulars	Number of respondents	percentage	Mean	SD
1.	<b>Time preference</b>			3.97	0.429
	a. Breakfast	0	0		
	b. Brunch	2	1.6		
	c. Lunch	7	5.7		
	<b>d. Snack</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>86.1</b>		
e. Late night meal	8	6.6			
2.	<b>Location preference</b>			2.62	1.278
	<b>Near home</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>34.4</b>		
	Near office	9	7.4		
	Downtown	29	23.8		
	<b>Other</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>34.4</b>		

From the table 5.3 it is clear that more number of respondents like to eat fast food as snack with 103 respondents and 42 respondents preference to consume near home and other locations. We can say that most of the consumers prefer to eat fast food as snack at different locations and near home where food is tasty rather than near office or downtown. Among 103 respondents who eat fast food as

snack 77 respondents are students as their convince time is post college hours.

#### **5.4. Age group influence on decision making**

Decision making behavior changes depending on age group and influence the purchasing behavior of the consumer. The survey respondents' information concerning their age group influence on decision making are aggregated and the findings are provided in bar chart 5.4.

**Table 5.4 Age group influence on decision making**

S.No	Particulars	Decision maker					Respondents	Percentage
		Spouse	Children	Friends	Parents	you		
1.	<b>16-23</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>53.3</b>
2.	24-29	0	3	12	1	33	49	40.8
3.	30-35	0	1	2	0	1	4	3.3
4.	36-41	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.8
5.	42 and above	0	0	1	1	0	2	1.6
	Total	0	4	29	10	77	120	100
		Chi square value- 21.833 , df-12 Asym. Sig (2-sided)-0.039						

From the 5.4 it is clear that among 64 respondents for 16-23 age group 42 respondents (65.62 per cent) and among 49 respondents for 24-29 age group 33 respondents (67.34 per cent) take their won decision in buying the food. Only 29 respondents (24.16) choose friends as decision makers in purchasing out of 120 respondents among all the age groups. From this we can conclude that there no influence of age in purchase decision making. Thus we can

conclude that we accept the null hypothesis as there is no difference.

#### **5.5. Share of Expenditure on Fast Food Consumption**

Expenditure on consumption depends on income of consumer. Person with no income spend less amount per week when compared to person with income. The survey respondents' information concerning their expenditure is aggregated and the findings are provided in the table 5.5.

**Table 5.5 Expenditure distribution based on Income**

S. No	Particulars	Expenditure/ week				Respondents Total	Percentage
		<200	300	500	>500		
1.	No income	46	7	2	2	57	47.50
2.	<10,000	0	1	2	0	3	2.50
3.	10,000-15,000	8	1	1	1	11	9.10
4.	>15,000	27	12	5	5	50	41.60
	<b>Total</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>
		Chi square value- 25.98,df-12 Asym.sig(2-sided)-0.021					

From table 5.5 we can say that among no income group respondents 46 members (80.7 per cent) spent less than 200 per week where as respondents with more than 15,000 income only 27 respondents (54 per cent) out of 50 spend less than 200 followed by only 11 respondents spend more 300 and more in case of no income group and 23 respondents spend 300 and more incase more than 15000 income group. Hence, we can conclude that there is

difference in expenditure on fast food depending on income.

### 5.6. Fast food expenditure is influenced by items consumed

Items consumed decide our expenditure on food. French fries costs less when compared to pizza or burger thereby our overall expenditure is less when we consume that. Likewise it applies for other items as well. Table 5.6 depicts the amount we spend on items.

**Table 5.6 Frequency of distribution of expenditure on different items**

S.No	Expenditure Items	<200/week	300/week	500/week	>500/week	Total
1.	Pizza	8	3	0	0	11
2.	Burger	4	0	0	0	4
3.	<b>French fries</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>32</b>
4.	Chicken popcorn	2	2	1	0	5
5.	<b>Fried chicken</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>54</b>
6.	Rolls	7	0	0	1	8
7.	other	6	0	0	0	6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>120</b>
		Chi Square Value-38.87, df - 24 Asym.sig(2-sided)-0.028				

Table 5.6 depicts that overall 28 respondents spend less than 200 on fried chicken compared to 26 respondents spend less than 200 on French fries, only 5 respondents spend 300 and more on French fries whereas on fried chicken 26 respondents spend 300 and more. As more number of respondent's favorite item is fried chicken they tend to spend more on fried chicken when compared to other. It is clear

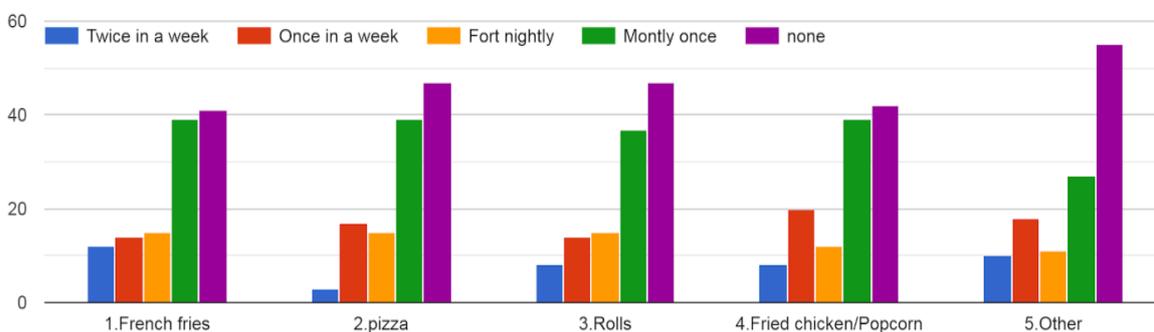
that expenditure is influenced depending on items we consume and

### 5.7. Consumption frequency per Month

Consumption frequency and brand frequency differs from one respondents to another depending on the product they buy and number of times they consume. The survey respondents' information concerning their brand and consumption is aggregated and the findings are provided in bar chart 5.7.

**Consumption frequency per month**

8. Consumption frequency/month



From chart 5.7 we can say that people consume French fries, pizza, rolls and fried chicken at least once a month.

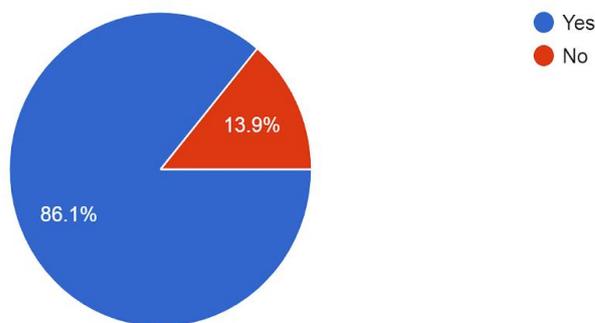
**5.8. Occasion of consumption**

Consumption frequencies changes depending on occasion and the occasion of visit differ

from person to person depending on convince. The survey respondents' information concerning their change in consumption frequency depending on occasion and occasion of consumption are aggregated and the findings are provided in pie chart 5.8.

**Chart 5.8 Change of Consumption Frequency Depending On Occasion**

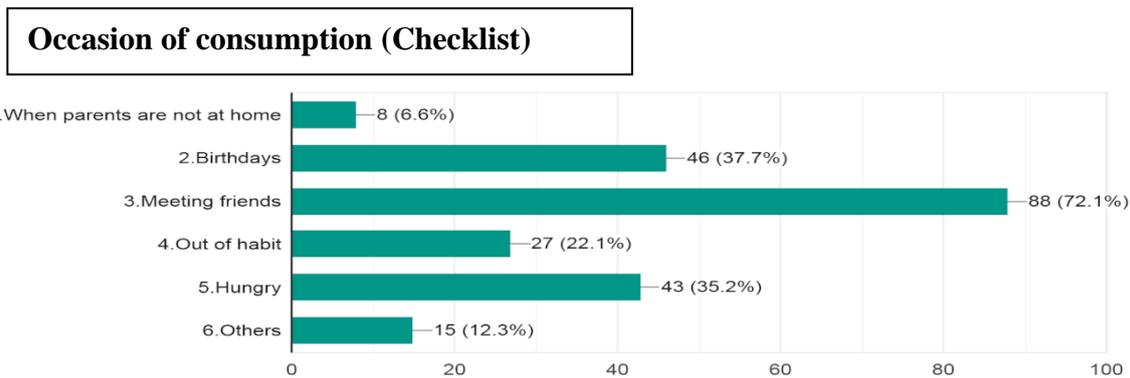
**Change in Consumption frequency**



From chart 5.8 we can say that consumption frequency changes depending on occasion like birthday, others day, anniversary etc. 103 respondents visit restaurants depending on

occasion and only 17 respondents said that frequency don't change depending on occasion.

**Chart 5.9 Consumer buying behavior with respect to Occasion**



From chart 5.9 we can say that the most frequent occasion for consumers to visit restaurant is meeting friends (88 respondents) followed by to celebrate birthdays with 46 respondents, hungry with 43 respondents.

**5.10. Expenditure on fast food depending on occasion**

Depending on occasion the amounts we spend vary.

**Table 5.10 Frequency distribution according to occasion**

S. No	Expenditure	<200/ week	300/week	500/week	>500 /week	Total
	Occasion					
1.	Birthdays	7	3	1	1	12
2.	<b>Meeting friends</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>85</b>
3.	Out of habit	2	2	0	4	8
4.	Hungry	9	1	0	1	11
5.	Others	4	0	0	0	4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>120</b>

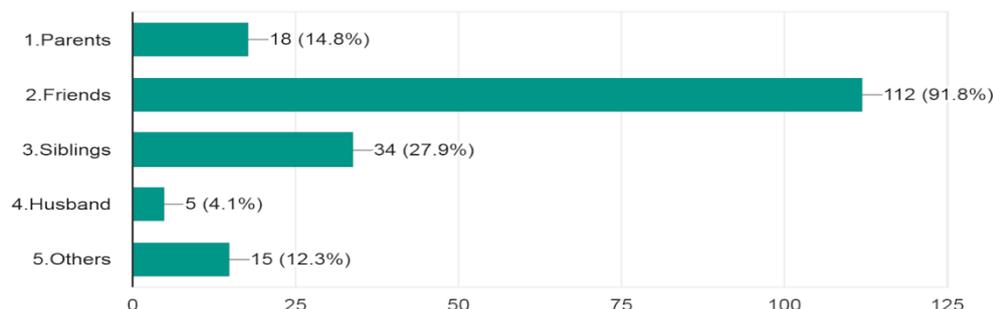
Chi Square Value-25.966, df - 16  
Asym.sig(2-sided)-0.017

Table 5.10 depicts that 85 respondents like to spend more money for meeting friends and 12 respondents spend money for birthdays followed by hungry. As most of the teenagers

visit outlets to meet friends and relax they tend to spend money for meeting friends when compared to other.

Chart 5.11 Visiting companion to restaurant

### Visiting companion to restaurant (checklist)



From 5.11. we can say that people like to visit restaurants with friends (112 respondents) followed by siblings, parents.

### CONCLUSION

This study attempts to reveal the consumer buying pattern of fast food. It revealed that expenditure on fast food is dependent on income, occasion of consumption, and items we consume. Thus the results can be used by managers to build new marketing strategies and develop marketing mix like creating fun and entertaining environment where consumer can chill with friends as more number of consumers visit with friends, providing friend coupons for frequent visitors to change the consumption pattern of fast food among buyers.

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